

# A Step Closer

## Update on the Summer 2008 Opening of BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre

### A state-of-the-art facility and BC Cancer Agency's world-renowned reputation attracts staff to Abbotsford Centre

With the opening of the new BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre only a few months away, hiring for unfilled positions will ramp-up this March. The majority of the roughly 127 positions will be filled in time for orientation and training before the centre opens this Summer.

Several key leadership positions will be shared between the Fraser Valley and Abbotsford Centres. For instance, Dr. Frances Wong, chief physician for the Fraser Valley Centre, will also take on the role of chief physician for Abbotsford. Over the past several months, the shared leadership team has been responsible for hiring critical positions such as medical and radiation oncologists, physicists, and clinical leaders for the Abbotsford Centre.

Now the focus is shifting to recruitment for radiation therapists, nurses, pharmacy, nutrition, counselling, clerical, and support staff. The positions will be posted internally within the BC Cancer Agency, and then unfilled vacancies will be posted externally.

It's a strategy that's worked well in the past with the opening of new cancer centres in the Fraser Valley (1995) and in Kelowna (1997). "The ideal situation is to bring in skilled professionals from other centres to maintain the high level of excellence in providing care and for those skilled professionals to orient new employees joining the Agency from other facilities, outside the province, or country," says Mary Flaherty, Interim Director of Regional Operations at the BC Cancer Agency's Fraser Valley and Abbotsford Centres.

"We've been very fortunate that highly-trained, committed Agency staff have purposely chosen to move to Abbotsford."

While there are challenges recruiting healthcare professionals, because of a nationwide shortage, Heather Denusik, Human Resources Consultant, believes the BC Cancer Agency's reputation as a leader in cancer treatment and research will draw people to fill the remaining positions. "People want to work for the BC Cancer Agency because in addition to the professional opportunities, there's a sense of pride in being involved with an organization which is so well-respected around the world."

**For more information on current opportunities at the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre, contact Heather at 604.877.6117 or e-mail her at [hdenusik@phsa.ca](mailto:hdenusik@phsa.ca) or click on the Abbotsford Centre link on our website at [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)**



*Dr. Frances Wong, chief physician for the Fraser Valley Centre and Mary Flaherty, Interim Director of Regional Operations for the BC Cancer Agency's Fraser Valley and Abbotsford Centres.*

### Public Forums

**7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Thursday, March 27**

**Wednesday, April 23**

Garden Park Towers  
2825 Clearbrook Rd.  
Abbotsford, BC

## Dr. Conrad Oja: a researcher and clinician

Conrad Oja was hired in September 2007 as a medical oncologist for the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre, but he was already a familiar face to many people at the Agency. He completed a residency and fellowship at the Agency's Vancouver Centre, and prior to that worked with the Advanced Therapeutics Program preparing novel drugs for clinical trials.

Since last year, Conrad has been taking care of cancer patients who will eventually receive treatment and care at the Abbotsford Centre when it opens in the Summer of 2008. He will also help establish the clinical trials program at the new centre.

It is the perfect balance of his professional goals. "Basic research is challenging and rewarding, but I was really interested in seeing research applied in a clinical setting where you can directly see the impact on patient care," says Conrad. After doing lab work in the private and public sector, Conrad set his sights on medical school and the BC Cancer Agency.

"I knew that I wanted to work for the BC Cancer Agency since I was in graduate school," says Conrad matter-of-factly. "It is the best place to pursue my research and clinical interests."

Excitement is brewing among the medical community, says Conrad, about the Agency's fifth regional centre. "We're going to offer a first-rate cancer treatment facility for patients with an active clinical trials program, that's part of the respected BC Cancer Agency network. It doesn't get much better than that."



*Dr. Conrad Oja, medical oncologist for the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre*

### Interested in working for the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre?

Check out our website at [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca) and click on the Abbotsford Centre link for current job postings and continual updates on the latest opportunities in the following areas:

- secretarial
- clerical
- health information services
- nursing
- radiation therapy
- pharmacy
- social work
- nutrition

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, the BC Cancer Agency provides a comprehensive cancer control program for the people of B.C., including prevention, screening, early detection, research, education, care and treatment. The Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre (ARHCC), a partnership with the Fraser Health Authority, is the Agency's fifth cancer centre.

#### Our Mission:

- Reduce the incidence of cancer
- Reduce the mortality from cancer; and
- Improve the quality of life for those living with cancer



**BC Cancer Agency**

CARE + RESEARCH

*An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority*



**Provincial Health  
Services Authority**  
Province-wide solutions.  
Better health.



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